

Amendments to the Drawings:

Amended FIG. 1 is withdrawn; FIG. 1 stands as originally filed.

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to withdraw the alleged new matter; amended FIG. 1 has been withdrawn and replaced with original FIG. 1; Claims 1, 17, 19 and 21 have been amended; Claims 7 and 18 have been cancelled; claims 1-6, 8-17 and 19-22 are before the examiner.

Claim 1 is amended to clarify that the rod axis is longitudinal and the load provided by the piston in the tensioning device is solely orthogonal to the rod axis.

Claim 17 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 18, now canceled. Claim 17 has also been amended to affirmatively recite that each clamping member has a fluid end recess and a power end recess on an inner surface of each clamping member arranged along an axis of the components, that a portion of each component is gripped and held within each of the respective recesses, and that the clamping members are brought together by a tensioning device located orthogonal to the axis of the components.

Claim 19 is amended to affirmatively recite the arrangement of the spring, and cancels language now finding antecedence in claim 17 from which claim 19 now depends.

Claim 21 is amended for consistency to depend from claim 17 rather than claim 18, which has been canceled.

No new matter has been added.

Objection to Drawings Under 37 CFR 1.83(a)

The drawings have been objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2d Paragraph

The Office Action rejected claims 17 and 19 as indefinite for using a generally narrative form. Applicant has clarified Claims 17 and 19 to affirmatively recite the allegedly narrative features. It is believed that the rejection is overcome.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the examiner for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 18 and 21. The limitations of claim 18 are presented in independent claim 17, and claim 18 has

been canceled. Claim 17, as amended, is allowable, as well as claims 19-22 which depend thereon. The 102(b) rejections of claim 17 in view of Kennedy and Labyer are moot.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) - Kennedy

Claims 1-6 and 8-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over applicant's earlier patent, U.S. Patent No. 5,904,071 to Kennedy et al. (hereinafter "Kennedy".) Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 1 recites a piston rod assembly for coupling between a power end and a fluid end of a high pressure reciprocating pump, the assembly comprising one or more clamping members arranged relative to a longitudinal rod axis between the power end and the fluid end, each member having a first end adapted to grip the power end component, and a second end adapted to grip the fluid end component, and at least one member including one or more tensioning devices, wherein said tensioning device comprises a piston to provide a load in said tensioning device only orthogonal to said rod axis and thereby secure said components against release.

As Applicant discloses:

"[t]he principal advantage of the present invention is that by applying a force orthogonally to the rod axis a greater securing force is provided to clamp the assembly to the component ends. This also dispenses with the need to provide apertures through the end components for locking pins" (US2007/0209473, [0026], emphasis added.)

In contrast, Kennedy is generally directed to a piston rod assembly comprising a power end component, a fluid end component and a connector wherein each of the piston rod and the power end are secured to the coupling by a coupling pin which extends through a radial aperture in each end of the connector through the respective component attached thereto. Kennedy thus discloses the exact type of connector which the presently claimed invention improves upon, i.e., a connector which provides apertures through the end components for locking pins. Kennedy fails to disclose or suggest a piston rod assembly comprising a tensioning device which provides a load in a tensioning device only orthogonal to the longitudinal rod axis to secure the components against release. Kennedy thus fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited by the presently claimed invention.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) - Aday

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,554,523 to Aday et al. (hereinafter "Aday".) Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Aday uses a hydraulic ram longitudinally aligned with the extension rod and piston rod of a mud pump, to provide a longitudinal compressive between the two rods. Kennedy fails to disclose or suggest a piston rod assembly comprising a tensioning device which provides a load in a tensioning device only orthogonal to the longitudinal rod axis to secure the components against release. Kennedy thus fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited by the presently claimed invention.

Conclusion

The claims, as amended, are now in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully solicit a prompt notice of allowability. In the alternative, Applicants invite the Office to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are any other issues outstanding which have not been presented to the Office's satisfaction.

Respectfully submitted,

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